

Excess cost bill...

What can I do to protect myself from excess cost?

The first step in dealing with excess costs is the planning of your shipment(s). It is important you take every opportunity possible to avoid or limit any potential excess cost situations. Excess cost exists when the cost for moving your property exceeds the amount you are authorized by the JFTR. Many factors contribute to excess cost, including attempted pickup and/or delivery, increased valuation, excess storage, excess distance and/or weight. The most common is excess weight. In many cases, excess cost is the result of poor or inadequate planning.

There are several steps you can take to help avoid excess costs.

- Dispose of unwanted items prior to the packers' arrival.
- If possible, arrange to witness the weighing/reweighing of your shipment as a representative of the government.
- Minimize storage in transit.
- Weight Restricted Areas: If you are moving to, from, or between weight restricted areas, make sure that any additional weight allowance that may be authorized is requested, approved, and annotated on your PCS orders.
- Shipping unneeded items can be very costly ... might be a great time for that garage sale.

Did you claim Professional Books, Papers, and Equipment (PBP&E)?

Be sure you tell the PPSO about PROFESSIONAL BOOKS, PAPERS, AND EQUIPMENT (PBP&E): Declare PBP&E if you have any, even if the estimated weight of your shipment is within your prescribed allowance. Declare PBP&E on your Application for Shipment/Storage (DD Form 1299) prior to pickup, in most cases you can not claim PBP&E after the move. Make sure the PBP&E is separately packed, weighed, marked, and identified on the inventory as "PBP&E" or "Pro Gear" with the weight and cube included. Civilian employees have separate requirements, please ask your counselor for details.

The driver forgot to identify my pro gear on the inventory even though I had it separated from the rest of my household goods with a sign on it! How can I get credit now, 8 months after delivery?

The regulations require PBP&E to be separately packed, clearly marked as professional items, and identified as such on the appropriate shipping documents. The member certifies that items listed on the carrier's household goods descriptive inventory were a true and complete list of the goods tendered to the carrier. The Navy allows identification of PBP&E at destination by the delivering agent or the local transportation office. However, the identification must be upon delivery or within a reasonable time period after delivery. Contact your destination PPSO for assistance.

What if the pickup weight of my HHGs exceeds my entitlement?

If your shipment is picked up and exceeds your weight allowance, ask the destination PPSO to have the shipment re-weighed. You can observe the weighing and re-weighing of your shipment if you would like. Re-weighing the shipment will not cause any increase in excess cost to you as the computation for shipment costs is based on the lower of the two weights.

Is there any thing else I can do to reduce my total shipping bill?

Try to minimize storage-in-transit (SIT): SIT raises the overall cost of the shipment, thus increasing your total cost. If your shipment is overweight, try to have a door to door move or at least have it delivered as soon as possible.

If you just can't bring yourself to part with the "valuable stuff", consider making a DITY move. With DITY, you will be paid an incentive of 95% of what the government would have paid to move the same property (up to the amount of weight remaining on your entitlement), less actual expenses and applicable taxes. Your incentive payment is based on the actual weight moved, not to exceed your prescribed weight allowance.

Unfortunately, once you incur excess cost for exceeding your household goods entitlement you are responsible for the cost. You can take steps to avoid being placed in this situation by following the helpful hints in the "It's Your Move Booklet" located at this Web address <http://www.hanscom.af.mil/JPPSO/itsymv.htm> Being proactive is the only way to eliminate or limit excess cost situations. If you feel you are in excess weight, or you are shipping to an unauthorized location you may want to consider doing a DITY or a partial DITY (GBL and DITY) move.

The carrier used "excessive packing" ... what can I do?

If you feel the carrier used excessive packing in your shipment, notify the destination PPSO prior to delivery. The PPSO can instruct the carrier to completely unpack the shipment and verify the weight of the packing materials. A warning on this: Once accomplished, this weight replaces the standard packing allowance and experience has shown that actual packing materials normally weigh less than the standard allowance. Electing this procedure may actually increase your excess cost.

I wasn't notified I was overweight after they picked up my household goods, why should I have to pay?

The fact you weren't advised of excess weight prior to shipment is not a basis for relieving you of liability for costs in excess of those allowed by the law. Nothing in the law or the Joint Federal Travel Regulations (JFTR) authorizes an exemption from indebtedness because a transportation officer may not have notified you of possible excess weight. The very nature of a shipment of household goods is such that the existence of excess weight cannot be determined until the official weight is established. Once a shipment is packed, inventoried, loaded and moved to official scales, excess cost has occurred.

I was promoted en route to my next permanent duty station but my personal property weight allowance was based on my lower rank, why?

Entitlements for personal property movement are based on your effective date of orders. The effective date of orders per the JFTR is described as: For members separating or retiring it is the last day of active duty. For those going PCS the effective date is the date a member is required to begin travel from the old permanent duty station in order to arrive at the new permanent duty station on the date authorized by the mode of transportation authorized or used plus one day. That sounds confusing so here is an example that may help clear it up:

- Authorized and actual reporting date..... 10 Jun
- Less 7 days travel time actually used.... 3 Jun
- Add 1 day..... 4 Jun
- Effective date of PCS order..... 4 Jun

The weight for transportation of household goods entitlement becomes fixed on the effective date of orders directing a permanent change of station. Travel orders may not be revoked or modified retroactively so as to increase or decrease the rights that have accrued.

My shipment from my previous PCS was well under my maximum weight allowance. As a matter of fact, I've never exceeded my household goods weight allowance and the packers assured me I was well under my weight allowance. How can I be overweight on this move?

Carriers are paid on the basis of GBL weights, as supported by certified weight tickets, and the member is responsible for all weight shipped in excess of their entitlement. Also, estimates made prior to loading of the property or verbal opinions on whether the member's property will exceed an allowance are not binding and cannot be used to challenge officially recorded weight.

My HHGs weigh more when delivered out of storage than when they were stored, now I am overweight ... how can this be?

Look at this example: A shipment was put into permanent storage when a sailor went overseas and the weight was 10,000 pounds. When the property was picked up from the storage location and delivered to the new duty station it weighed 10,550 pounds. The first weight was not identified as being excess but they identified the move of the same property out of storage as excess and the sailor got a bill. How can they have a weight validated by weight tickets as one weight and the same property also validated by another weight and it weigh 550 pounds more? Why can't they use the lower weight in calculating excess costs? The answer to this is: It isn't unusual for the same property to have different weights in those cases where the property is removed from permanent storage. Additional packaging and bracing for the move to the new duty station could increase the weight. Variables in different scales also could contribute to weight differences. The government pays for the storage based on the weight ticket obtained at the time the property is placed into storage. When the property is released from storage a new weight is obtained and the government must pay the carrier on the new weight ticket.

When the packers finished, the driver arrived and his van already had a large shipment in it. Was I charged for the weight already in the van?

It is not unusual for carriers to load more than one person's property on a van. Weights are obtained before and after each loading/off loading. Any other property on the truck becomes a part of the tare weight. Thus, the net weight of your property was not affected.

OK, I got a bill for exceeding my entitlement ... now what?

If you try and follow the above suggestions and you still receive a DD Form 139 (Pay Adjustment Authorization), there is an appeal process open to you. If you contact the PPSO before you pay the debt, you have three (3) avenues of appeal:

First - Your First Avenue is submitting a rebuttal to: Naval Transportation Support Center (NAVTRANS), 1837 Morris Street, Suite 600, Norfolk, VA 23511-3492. You must state the reasons why you wish to dispute the debt.

Second -- Members may file a written request for a review of the circumstances to: Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP), 5450 Carlisle Pike, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055-0791. Be sure to include copies of all available paper work you may have to substantiate your position along with any information sent to you from NAVTRANS.

Third --BOARD FOR CORRECTION OF MILITARY RECORDS - If you feel an injustice exists, your next step is a review by the Board for Correction of Military Records. Complete a DD Form 149 (Application for Correction of Military Records) and mail to: Board of Correction of Naval Records, Dept. of the Navy, Washington, DC 20370-5100. Responses to your first avenues of appeal that you have completed as outlined above, must accompany this application.

Keep in mind it may take anywhere from 6 months to 1 year after your move before you receive notification of indebtedness for exceeding your entitlements. This delay is due to carrier billing procedures and the gathering of information worldwide by the Excess Cost Adjudication Function.

Do not hesitate to use the above appeal process. And remember, you may use an avenue more than once if all of your information was not considered. Hold on to your shipping documents just perchance you need them in an excess cost claim.